

# WHERE DO ALL OF THESE GREAT PROGRAMS COME FROM?

If you're reading this now in *StarTuned*, it's likely that you own, manage, or are otherwise employed at an independent repair shop or collision repair facility that does a large amount of repair and maintenance work on Mercedes-Benz vehicles. If so, you've certainly noticed over the last few years that Mercedes-Benz, in concert with your local dealership, has become very aggressive in implementing programs and services to make it easier and more profitable for you to buy replacement parts from that dealership's parts department.

But where do these ideas come from? Who dreams them up and then takes steps to see that they are implemented in a professional and effective manner?

As you would expect, these ideas come from a dedicated team of experts with a deep understanding of the parts aftermarket and a keen comprehension of the business model typical of independent repair shops.

Heading up this team is Stefanie Schweigler, who carries the title of Program Lead, Wholesale Business Development. Stefanie and her team exist for one purpose — to make it faster, easier, and more profitable for you to buy your replacement parts from your local dealership's parts department.

You've seen the fruits of their labor in the recently-introduced *StarParts*, a price-competitive line of the most commonly-replaced maintenance items in Mercedes-Benz vehicles. And, as you'll read in the pages of this issue of *StarTuned*, Stefanie and her team have just launched Mercedes-Benz *StarRewards*, a program that provides cash rebates for your purchases from your local dealership.

Other programs conceived and implemented by Stefanie and her colleagues include the *PartsPro* dealership wholesale certification program, the *Genuine PartProtection* extended limited parts and labor warranty, and of course *RepairLink* and *CollisionLink*, the advanced online parts ordering systems that speed the placement of parts orders.

So what would qualify a person to head up such an important business unit? If you immediately thought of someone with several decades of experience working within the Mercedes-Benz family and an M.B.A. from a prestigious university, you'd have a good understanding of Stefanie Schweigler. Stefanie has spent most of her

working career with MBUSA, nearly two decades, virtually all of which has involved helping dealerships build relationships with their independent repair shops wholesale business customers.



Stefanie Schweigler

Her work has involved many tools, initiatives, and programs directly targeting the wholesale business community, including implementation of a particularly user-friendly website, and the development and distribution of technical publications and resources such as the publication you're reading right now.

Stefanie is adamant that the success of MBUSA's wholesale parts initiative is founded on a close working relationship between the Mercedes-Benz dealerships and the independent repair shops, which have a choice as to where to buy their replacement parts. By enhancing the availability of, and access to, OEM parts, Stefanie and her team have a keen understanding of the importance of "Just In Time" delivery to shops that can't afford to tie up service bays for days waiting for parts.

Furthermore, she feels strongly that support of all kinds — technical, marketing, and business management — build a partnership that engenders mutual trust, loyalty, and appreciation of the needs of their business partners.

Just think of all of the support available to you from Mercedes-Benz dealerships — *StarParts*, the newly-introduced *StarRewards* program, dedicated wholesale parts specialists, trainers, outside sales consultants, fast and accurate online ordering if you choose, aggressive pricing structures to keep *Genuine Mercedes-Benz* replacement parts cost-competitive, and customer-driven delivery schedules.

These value-added support services complement the many other reasons to patronize your local dealership's parts department and wholesale parts specialists — all thanks to folks like Stefanie Schweigler, whose full-time job is to make your business more efficient and profitable. |